

**Heavy Use Area Protection**...the stabilization of areas frequently used by people, animals, or vehicles by establishing vegetative cover, by surfacing with suitable materials, and/or by installing needed structures.



Heavy use livestock area, photo courtesy USDA – Natural Resources Conservation Service

## Purposes

This practice can be used to achieve the following purposes:

- ☒ **To reduce soil erosion**
- ☒ **To improve water quantity and quality**
- ☒ **To improve air quality**
- ☒ **To improve aesthetics**
- ☒ **To improve livestock health**

## Benefits

Stabilizing heavily trafficked areas by applying materials or installing structures can reduce soil erosion and resulting sedimentation to nearby waterbodies, improving water quality.

## Applications

This practice applies to urban, agricultural, recreational, or other frequently and intensively used areas requiring treatment to address one or more resource concerns.

## Design and Installation

Heavy use area protection may be used on any land area frequently and intensely used by people, animals, or vehicles. For instance, this practice is applicable at stream crossings for cattle or farm equipment, around cattle watering or feeding facilities, or cattle feedlots or walkways.

Foundation preparation consists of removing and disposing soil and other materials that are not adequate to support the designed loads. A geotextile fabric is often installed under treatment areas for added stability. The surface treatment is designed to accommodate the expected type of traffic. The prescribed surface treatment may involve pavement for vehicle traffic or vegetation for people and animals.

## Maintenance

Treated areas and associated practices should be inspected annually and after significant storm events to identify areas in need of repair.

## Relative Cost

**Installation**      low ● ● ● ● ● high

**Maintenance**      low ● ● ● ● ● high

## For Additional Information...

Visit the Minnesota NRCS office online at <http://www.mn.nrcs.usda.gov/>, see the Minnesota Job Sheet or the Field Office Technical Guide (FOTG) standard for (561) Heavy Use Area Protection, or contact your local USDA-NRCS office

*Local USDA-NRCS contact information*